



SOUTH AFRICA

WORLD CONFERENCE ON CONSTITUTIONAL JUSTICE (WCCJ) FACT SHEET

The **Constitutional Court of South Africa** and the **Venice Commission** have embarked upon a partnership to host, for the first time, a World Conference on Constitutional Justice in Cape Town from 23 - 24 January 2009. This event will attract the participation of representatives from courts of constitutional jurisdiction from many parts of the world, including the members of various regional groups of courts of constitutional jurisdiction - Arab, Asian, Commonwealth, European, French Speaking, Ibero-American, Southern African, and Young Democracies/CIS.

The event, with the theme of: "Influential Constitutional Justice - its influence on society and on developing a global jurisprudence on human rights", seeks to create a platform for cooperation between these diverse courts from around the world engaged in constitutional review, and to advance the development of global human rights principles. It will seek to examine the impact of these courts on the societies in which they operate, and the extent to which their case-law is able to shape the development of human rights.

There are already over 35 papers submitted for the WCCJ. For more details on the conference, participants and access to these papers, please go to: http://www.venice.coe.int/WCCJ/WCCJ_papers_E.asp

The Venice Commission (<http://www.venice.coe.int>), established in 1990 (also known as the European Commission for Democracy through Law), is an important advisory body to the Council of Europe on all constitutional issues. The Commission has made significant contributions to the adoption of constitutions that comply with the standards and principles of Europe's constitutional heritage. The Commission has evolved over the years to become an internationally respected independent legal think-tank, from its original conception as a tool for emergency constitutional engineering alone. The Commission has a successful track record in providing "constitutional first-aid" to individual states, and apart from its role in distributing critical information regarding European constitutional heritage, it continues to provide unrivalled crisis management and conflict prevention support, with an emphasis on constitution building and advice.

Membership of the Venice Commission

Member countries of the Commission are:

- Albania
- Andorra
- Armenia
- Austria

- Azerbaijan
- Bosnia and Herzegovina
- Bulgaria
- Croatia
- Czech Republic
- Denmark
- Estonia
- France
- Germany
- Hungary
- Ireland
- Korea, Republic
- Kyrgyzstan
- Latvia
- Lithuania
- Malta
- Monaco
- Netherlands
- Poland
- Romania
- Serbia
- Slovenia
- Sweden
- "The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia"
- Turkey
- Ukraine
- Belgium
- Cyprus
- Finland
- Georgia
- Greece
- Iceland
- Italy
- Liechtenstein
- Luxembourg
- Moldova
- Montenegro
- Norway
- Portugal
- Russian Federation
- Slovakia
- Spain
- Switzerland
- United Kingdom

Associate Member Countries

- Belarus

Observer Countries

- Argentina
- Israel
- Kazakhstan
- United States of America
- Canada
- Japan
- Mexico
- Uruguay

Special Status Countries

- European Union
- South Africa (special co-operation status)

Other Countries

- Commonwealth
- OSCE
- Tajikistan
- Community of Independent States
- Palestinian National Authority
- Turkmenistan